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ABSTRACT

John Hancock Life Insurance Company and Boston University sponsored a symposium on the new media and public communication. The keynote address by Frank Shakespeare was on the unconscious bias of network news. Three speakers discussed citizen access to information and television channels with reference to First Amendment rights and FCC regulations. Next three businessmen spoke of communications in the future and its effect on marketing, management systems, and corporate organization. Following this, a panel discussed the new media and its effects on journalism and journalists. Arthur Stambler warned the symposium that excessive governmental regulation is on the verge of destroying cable television. The impact of the new communication technology on the balance between society's need for information and the citizen's right to privacy was examined by legal, academic, and industry specialists. Closing the symposium, Peter Goldmark explored the ramifications of distributing people and resources by means of communications technology. (WH)

The New Media And Public Communication: Can We Survive the Electronic Revolution?

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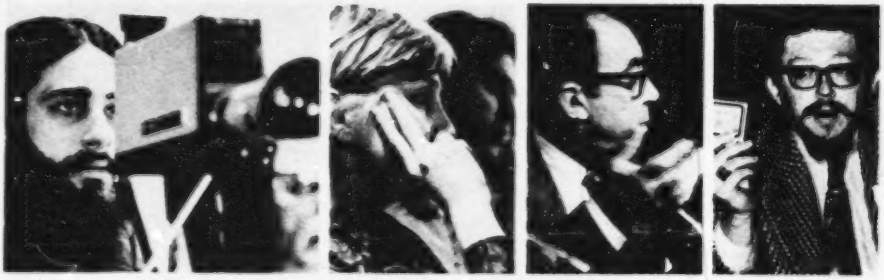

A Symposium
Sponsored by John Hancock
Life Insurance Company
And Boston University
School of Public
Communication in
Conjunction with
John Hancock's 1973
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Program

Television network news does deal more sympathetically with propositions and personalities on the liberal side of our political spectrum.

Former U.S. Information Agency Director Frank Shakespeare charged in his keynote address that until network television news provides personnel of varying political philosophies, instead of depending on newspeoples' objectivity, the people will continue to get somewhat biased coverage. Presently executive vice president for broadcasting, learning and leisure of Westinghouse Electric Corporation, Shakespeare spent 17 years in a number of executive posts at CBS.

There has been renewed attention in the last few weeks to the question of the ideological objectivity of television network news as it reports the events in our society. Now I'll give you a premise which will be highly controversial: in my view it is observably true that over any extended period of reporting time, television network news will deal more sympathetically with propositions and personalities on the liberal side of our political spectrum than it will deal with propositions and personalities on the conservative side of our political spectrum, and I use the terms conservative and liberal very loosely, understanding that there is no such thing as a specific liberal or specific conservative.

It has been historically true that people whose natural instincts take them into the creative media have tended, as a broad generality, to be positioned on what we would call the liberal side of the political spectrum. That is to say they tend to the left of the body politic in any society. Now, why is that relevant in television news? The significance is that we in this country are a meritocracy. We hire people on the basis of what they can do, not on what they believe. Personal political and philosophic views are basically irrelevant in terms of a business hiring a newsman to perform a job.

Network newspeople are honest, devoted, sincere, patriotic, highly skilled professionals. But you run into certain psychological barriers and the barriers are very profound. And let me take you right to the bottom line on what the barrier is. Is it possible for ten conservatives sitting together, day after day after day, sweating blood to be fair to liberal propositions? Is it possible for ten liberals to do likewise? I submit it is not – that there are psychological barriers which are almost impossible for human beings to overcome. I submit that probably the only real objective comes with the clash of ideas in the marketplace. Thus, I think one could be quite comfortable with any round table or any group of people that consisted, for the sake of discussion, of six liberals and four conservatives clashing constantly, and out of that mix would come objectivity. Objectivity in the sense that a diversity of spectrum views would be presented in a very sort of natural form. It is extremely difficult for the ablest and most honest of people to present that clash of ideas fully, if they themselves are overwhelmingly on one side of the issues involved.

Now the tragedy of this is that it isn't understood why it's occurring. There are many in political life who think it is

occurring because there is a cabal, because there's a group of people who are trying to twist things, because of deliberate distortion, because of people who are not trying to be fair. That is absolute nonsense. Anyone who has worked in television knows that these people in the news departments sweat blood to try to tell it straight.

So, what goes wrong? There is a simpatico among people with certain persuasions, there are peer group pressures with a sort of distinctive, unsaid understanding of what is right and what is wrong. There is the commonly accepted view of what is the correct way to participate in the broad thrust of our society. It is all those unspoken atmospheric things that create climate, and climates impact all of this because we are all human.

Now we come to a very tough question. What should you do about it? You could turn to government and you could say this thing is a crying outrage and the government ought to do something about it. And the government can do something about it because it has the power of licensing over the five key owned stations of the television networks which are the core of their financial stability and profitability. And through the FCC you could probably march down that licensing road and say, "we want things done differently." So, I suppose that the government, if it were determined to do so, could probably be much rougher legally with television than it could be with the printed press because there is some question as to the degree of the applicability of the First Amendment to television, whereas there is none, whatsoever, thank God, about printed press. But I think it is unthinkable, to be avoided at all costs, and would be a tragedy for the country for the government at any time to seek to interfere with television programming or television news, regardless of the substantive comments, substantive input of what goes on the tube. Now what else can be done?

There is the possibility of public pressure – knowledgeable people and people who are newsmakers are beginning to speak out. It is already having some results. CBS has introduced CBS Spectrum. This really means a management decision that they will seek out commentators from three philosophic vantage points roughly described as the left, the right and the middle. Then they tell their commentators, "say what you believe, say what you think is right, comment in any way that you think valid in terms of what's happening in this country and the world." Now in that way you get a clash of ideas. Secondly, and to take an entirely different medium, the New York Times has its Op-Ed page which attempts to do the same thing.

Frank Shakespeare

So I think that the deliberate insertion of many clashing ideas among the commentators on television and on radio is a very useful step. And, lastly, I would encourage young people, people at this university, from all parts of the spectrum, to spend your life in communications. It is the most exciting life you can have. It is very important for young people who philosophically are on the other side of the spectrum to think not only of business as a career, but communications as well.

The great cry for access to cable channels today grows immediately out of the general inadequacy of broadcasters to satisfy what many see as the needs of the American community.

Citizen access to information and channels – what does it mean? What will it cost? What are its implications? What are First Amendment rights in relation to access to channels and new FCC access regulations? These questions were examined in a panel discussion on the right of access to information and channels.

On the real hopes for broad access: Noah Mandell, Mitre Corporation

There's tremendous interaction between people and the media, but it's not always predictable. I would say that the great cry for access to cable channels today grows immediately out of the general inadequacy of broadcasters to satisfy what many see as the needs of the American community today. The economics of the situation will necessarily limit the number of licenses and call for maximization of profits.

When the whole wealth and talent and genius of America is incapable of providing 12 viewable hours of television each day, I do get skeptical about utilization of 88 channels in one city. I think cable will have far greater impact than many of us currently believe, but it will take the form of institutional uses. Futuristic plans such as El Segundo indicate lots of interactive ways in which cable should be utilized. I think delivery of social and rehabilitation services and medical services are important applications, for instance.

I foresee cable television functioning most efficiently in the distribution of magazine format special interest programming. It will finally disintegrate to the distribution of pre-packaged programming to special interest groups who can't collectively present a large enough audience to attract broadcaster service. I know I'm extraordinarily pessimistic.

On the First Amendment's application to the media: Jerome Barron, professor of law, George Washington University

One hopeful development with regard to the print media took place in Florida recently. Florida has a statute which requires that a newspaper editorially attacking a candidate for political office during a political campaign provide that candidate an equal opportunity on its pages to respond. In upholding the constitutionality of that statute recently, the Florida Supreme Court argued that freedom of expression is retained by the people through the First Amendment for all the people and not merely for a select few. The First Amendment did not create a privileged class which through a monopoly of instruments of the newspaper industry should be able to deny to the people the freedom of expression which the First Amendment guarantees them. By a tendency toward monopolization, the voice of the press tends to become exclusive in its observations and wisdom, which in turn deprives the public of their right to know both sides of a controversial matter.

The court could not conceive of how it would offend anyone's sense of

assuring that debate which the First Amendment is all about to deny that the dominant newspaper in the state can attack with impunity a candidate for public office without giving him any right to respond. That was not their idea of what the First Amendment was all about.

On the right to communicate from wherever you are: Red Burns, executive director and co-founder, Alternate Media Center, New York University

The local community of interest, after their interest has been aroused by what the cable system can do, will be willing to pay for the system, although initially, cable systems have been asked to put up the funds themselves. And the public might be encouraged or trained to make effective use of public access to these channels.

Public access should be developed in terms of a total system, for people should be given the opportunity to communicate from wherever they are. For example, in one town where the people were given the opportunity to question the superintendent of schools over cable TV, the originally scheduled two-hour program ran to six and one-half hours. The people responded very positively, for they had established a one-to-one contact with the superintendent and received answers to their own personal questions. You don't have to be a professional to communicate. The people of the community will begin to interact when they see this type of dialogue. It is in this interactive potential that I see the real future of cable TV.

By the year 2000 our use of paper will be secondary. It will be cheaper to send messages electronically than through the mail.

Three representatives of the business community gave projections of communication in the future and the new media's expected stimulation of innovations in marketing, management systems and corporate organization.

On the paperless society: Dr. Vincent E. Giuliano, senior staff, Arthur D. Little Company

The $1.5 billion currently being spent on the development of narrow band communications will rise to $7 billion by 1980. The driving force behind this development is economic. There is a clear-cut market for transmitting messages via computer rather than through

Conrad Matuzak

our current mailing system. Remote data base publishing is already in existence and will continue to grow. It will become cheaper to send messages electronically than through the mail. Whereas to reproduce and store a page of a book in a memory bank five years ago cost five dollars, today it costs thirty cents and by 1980 we think the price will be about a penny a page. Computer terminals will

become as prevalent as the typewriter is today in business offices and business people will be able to carry their office in a briefcase with the capability of sending information through a small compact terminal to their home-based terminal from anywhere in the country and receiving information back. Use of broad band communication channels depends mostly on its feasibility and acceptability to organizations and society. Conditioning for such acceptability is what will probably occur between now and 1980.

On what's being developed: Vincent Ridikas, Theta-Com of California

Theta-Com, a manufacturer of equipment for cable TV, is testing Interactive Cable TV equipment in El Segundo, California, for Theta Cable, the cable operator in the Los Angeles area. The Interactive Cable TV system — ICTV — can carry signals in two directions, unlike the conventional CATV born in the forties in areas where reception of broadcasting stations was very poor. The newer interactive system can carry signals from a central point to subscribers and vice versa. The potential for this system and its home terminal unit with channel selector, keyboard for messages and proper tape printer seem endless. Possible consumer and commercial services include first-run movies and blacked-out sports events, which the subscriber can preview and then purchase with the touch of a button, announcements which he can respond to immediately, like home shopping, instruction and training for specialized groups on limited access channels, security and fire alarms hooked up to police and fire departments, at-home ticket purchasing, credit card checking, inventory control, health services, and advertising testing. Perhaps ICTV can even make a dent in the energy crisis by facilitating power load management. For example, during peak hours of usage, the electric companies can instruct the system to cut certain power uses by computer. Every hot water heater could be reduced to half power. This could eliminate the need for a new generating plant. Two-way cable communications are inevitable, because of social needs, new technology available, and the growth of cable TV. Expecting to have 1000 terminals installed in El Segundo by March of 1974, Theta-Com projects the use of ten million interactive terminals in U.S. homes by 1980.

On the need for social acceptance: Conrad Matuzek, marketing supervisor for data communication, New England Telephone

Up to this point technologically sophisticated communication systems have been developed so that business can get more accurate information more quickly in order to make better judgments than we could in the past. But in the future these systems will increasingly influence our personal lives as well as internal business organizations. When you combine this projection with the fact that the time gap between the "dream phase" and the "social acceptance" phase of development is lessening, you can see that it has become paramount that the people who are involved in the development and implementation of these systems work much closer together than they have in the past. Only then will we have a system that is viable both to our corporations and our private citizens.

Advancing technology will result in more knowledgeable, sophisticated and professional journalists, the abolition of newspapers as principally factories, and a citizenry with access to more diversified channels of communication.

A panel discussion on the new media and its effects on the working press covered electronic editing, the status and potential of cable television, and the probability of higher quality professional journalism in the brave new world of electronic communication.

On the quality of journalism: Ben Bagdikian, national correspondent for the Columbia Journalism Review

The age of advanced communications technology will see the end of newspapers as factories, which require efficient production managers as leaders. Now only about ten per cent of budgets go toward editorial work. When our news is in digital form in computers our newspapers will need as leaders people who are intelligently and socially capable of presiding over a core of professional analysts of contemporary social and economic events rather than over a factory. The individual journalist will have to serve a citizenry which has seen events in complete detail on a monitored video channel. We will need, then, journalists who know a great deal about the subject at hand, so they can integrate the information which has come raw over video into an historical context and analyze it objectively – journalists who have a broad general knowledge of the working of society and, in their specialties, a level of knowledge that approaches that of the newsmakers. This will help control media manipulators. What will the social impact be of all our fancy hardware? It's safe to assume that with our added communications capacity we'll see still more acceleration of social reaction time. That is, all of the events of society will continue to occur at a faster and faster rate. For this reason I have a basic disagreement with the opinion that as we speed up, the news media should restrain from "instant reporting." Our entire social system is speeded up – our business life, our intellectual and academic life, our individual patterns of living. So, it would not only be impractical and maybe impossible to hold back the news, but it would be damaging, because we would be withholding current developments from a system that is already responding to communications other than the formal news media (e.g., the telephone). So, we

Hyman Goldin

will not need fewer journalists in our brave new world of electronic communication, but more. But they must be a highly sophisticated, disciplined core of journalists who can analyze for the citizen all the fragments of information, which he views on the screen of the future.

On electronic editing: Albert L. Abbot, associate editor of communications, The Detroit News

The construction of a suburban printing and distribution plant 23 miles removed from downtown editorial offices led to the installation of an electronic editing system at the Detroit News. Now the reporter's story is "typed" on the keyboard of a CRT (cathode ray tube) terminal and edited at the touch of a key, whether it be a misspelling or deletion of a whole paragraph, and produced as a perfect, clean story on the screen. Stories can be stored, transmitted to the city editor or the printing plant, or printed as hard copy in whatever quantity the writer wants. A "comp room" key sends the story into the printing plant's comp room computer where it is electronically set in type and justified. Just like in the old days, stories can even be transmitted in takes. Although the News has not terminated any of its production staff, through a process of attrition, they will eventually save millions of dollars with the system.

On the status of cable TV: Dr. Hyman H. Goldin, Massachusetts Cable Commission

The cable industry, forced to make it in the large urban areas where it is difficult and expensive to set up operations, is in serious trouble. Among excessive government regulation – prodded by opposing industry forces – a sour money market, collapse of confidence in the industry leader, Teleprompter, unfavorable copyright rulings, and skyrocketing plant costs, the FCC go ahead of 1972 has fallen flat on its face. Not only must cable meet a market test, but that sticky question of being in "the public interest" as well.

While the immediate future of cable is overcast, at the Massachusetts Cable Commission we are developing our regulatory programs on the assumption that cable will survive and flourish. As a measure of that confidence, we are currently concerning ourselves with preventing structural monopolization by the cable companies and are exploring effective methods of divorcing control of the conduit from ownership and control of the program content. We see cable entrepreneurs as suppliers of plant and facilities, while a great variety and diversity of other companies or groups program the individual channels.

On the federal level, the FCC takes the stance that cable can serve the public interest by complementing, not undermining the established system of "free" television. It may offer local origination, focusing on new, innovative services not provided by broadcasters. In areas where cable is not competing with broadcasting, the regulatory scheme is somewhat more progressive and more attuned to cable's potential. Some examples: a minimum requirement of 20 channels; new systems must have the capacity to provide two-way digital communication; new systems must have several "access" channels, available without charge, and ear-marked for the public, local governments, and educators with no operator censorship beyond control of obscenity, lottery information or advertising; new systems must lease some channels on a first-come, first served basis. Finally, in pragmatic terms, the argument for regulation of programming by a governmental body will be attenuated, if we have a workable system of open use, free of cablecaster control.

The bloom is off the cable rose. CATV development is now in trouble, serious trouble.

Communications law specialist Arthur Stambler warned symposium attendees that excessive government regulation is on the verge of destroying cable television. A senior partner in the Washington law firm of Stambler and Shrinsky, Mr. Stambler has been specializing in radio-television and CATV in his private legal practice for the past 13 years. He did his basic training under former FCC Commissioner Frieda Hennick, the tough mother of educational television in the early fifties.

Today I am only going to try to make one point with you. Namely, that CATV development is now in trouble, serious trouble, that the bloom is off the cable rose. It is going to take a lot of serious *thought* and strenuous effort by many people in the industry to get back on the right track before it even has a fighting chance to achieve some of that rosy future and those tremendous capabilities that all of you know it has.

To my way of thinking cable is unfortunately headed in the same direction as educational television with the likelihood of the same disappointment and results. Despite the fact that you in Boston probably enjoy the best educational station in the United States, educational TV realized only a small fraction of its vast potential.

Some of the factors that have restricted and continue to restrict cable's growth into a giant and meaningful medium are: economic – cable is expensive, make no bones about it, the $3,500 a mile to install an early primitive cable system in a small town back in 1955 can today be as much as $15,000 a mile or even $25,000-$35,000 or $50,000 each mile for a new modern sophisticated system in a large metropolitan area. The higher price of course is due to the necessity of building underground for environmental reasons.

In some cities where people have gotten franchises and started to build underground, they have come back and offered the city $100,000 – this is an actual case in California – to please be permitted to get out of the franchise because they can't build it underground. They didn't know it was all rock.

Now, when you add to it, sophisticated two-way capability and studios stocked with cameras, and switches and so forth for this community access everyone's talked about, the cost begins to skyrocket. Nor is that cost factor helped by all of the additional burdens of other requirements that the city or the State presses upon the cable entrepreneur in terms of two-way capability. It sounds very nice. But the minute you put that into a cable franchise, you may double or triple the cost of building the system.

He'll promise it to get the franchise, but, unfortunately, he won't build it out there in the street where it counts.

There is also a financial problem of how to build and pay for this system. This is not the same thing as the economic one. The financial question is how you pay for it. Cable construction money, the real money to cable a Boston, or a Detroit, or a Washington is hard to come by and getting harder. The bloom is off the cable rose on Wall Street. You just

can't float some issue and get a lot of money. I am sure you have heard for example what happened to the leader of the industry, Teleprompter went to 160 and split two to one. The stock was selling for 80. It went down steadily. Two months ago when it hit 9, they suspended trading. It is about to start trading again, but some estimates are as low as three for the stock. And, we all know what interest rates are. Cable companies pay anywhere from 10 to 18 percent to get capital to construct the system. This means that if a company borrowed $25 million to cable one or two major metropolitan areas, every year they have a nut to crack, as we say, of interest from $2.5 to $4 million just to get the money to construct the system. That's an awful lot of bread to pay out and you have to repay part of the loans for several years while the system is being built. It's not like a television or radio station for which you get a franchise, build it in three months, and then put your salesmen on the street to bring in money. Then it's going to be several years before you have a level of subscribers sufficient to bring in enough money to make the thing break even, never mind make money or get your money back.

Arthur Stambler

And please remember that the FCC has already ruled out of the game of cable development one of the few companies large and sophisticated enough to make the huge investments and carry the heavy operating losses. I refer, of course, to Bell Telephone, which by FCC rules cannot own and operate a cable system where it also has a telephone company. I am no apologist or supporter for Bell Telephone, but facts are facts. That was one company that might have been able to do it and might have wanted to do it in a large metropolitan community and might have been able to integrate into the telephone system.

There is another basic problem in my view which is not universal but a problem, nonetheless. Cable technology is simply not ready to provide the many services that are being projected — two-way capability, data banks or delivery by mail or the housewife who will push a button. That's a long way off. The equipment is a long way off. The installation is a long way off. I think this is mostly because a very tight FCC regulation for the past seven years has discouraged cable people from building in major metropolitan communities or developing the equipment.

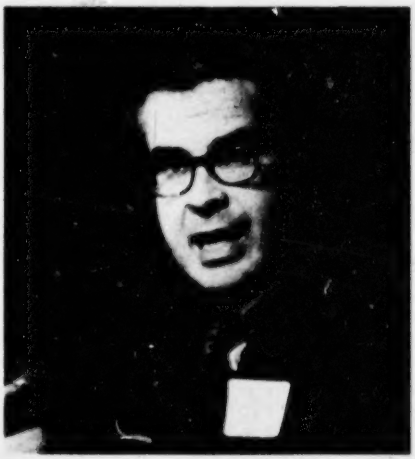
Educational TV and UHF are just two examples of systems with overwhelming potential that were essentially destroyed through overactive regulation. Restrictions of signals, stringent technical requirements and strict regulations by local authorities are greatly hampering the really great potential of cable TV, too. If Alexander Graham Bell lived today and had just invented the telephone, FCC, state and local regulatory agencies would so restrict its development and use that only a select, wealthy segment of society would enjoy the convenience of his invention. The bloom is off the cable television rose, because too many people have concerned themselves with how to regulate this media rather than with how to develop its actual potential.

In our mass society it is becoming increasingly common to make decisions about people on the basis of "the record."

The impact of the new communication technology on the balance between society's need for information and the citizen's right to privacy was examined by legal, academic, and industry specialists.

On striking a balance: Arthur R. Miller, Massachusetts Privacy and Security Commission and Harvard Law School

Decreasing face-to-face decision making about people is only one of many serious implications of our galloping information-gathering capability. The freedom to assemble and start dossiers on any "political malcontent" who dares raise his or her head above the crowd, the third-party and secondary use of information collected for another purpose, and the almost total lack of control over access to computerized information pose very serious potential threats to our fundamental rights. Are we moving toward the fabled womb-to-tomb dossier talked about so much by Orwell and Huxley? Government units store personal files on millions of Americans: Civil Service Commission, 5.6 million investigative and employee records; Social Security Administration, 100,000,000; civil disturbance unit of the U.S. Justice Department, a very sophisticated dossier system; and the secret service, files on malcontents, activists, and undesirables. I am willing to assume that virtually everyone of these data banks has a positive underlying social purpose. National security is a legitimate social policy. Credit bureau data banks help the business community make enlightened judgments on who to lend money to, who to insure and who to employ. But, we must decide at what point the threat to individual rights outweighs information's usefulness to society. The military intelligence units of the U.S. Army compiled files on seven million Americans from the time of the inner-city riots of 1966-67 and 1971, when Sam Ervin's committee studying military surveillance uncovered this collection. These seven million included not only members of the weathermen and the KKK, but anybody whose head had surfaced above the crowd in the prior five years — i.e., equal rights demonstrators and anyone who spoke out on the war in Southeast Asia. If you allow this unregulated data collection of intelligence-type information, you pose a potential threat to fundamental civil liberties. After all, the acts that got Congressmen, ACLU and NAACP peo-



Arthur Miller

e, clergymen and peace activists all into
e military computer consisted of dis-
ıt, speech, assembly, petition, all rights
aranteed expressly by the U.S. Consti-
tion. This is intimidating. Will the citi-
n think twice before speaking his
ınd, if he feels what he is saying will go
record — a record he will probably
ıt see and will almost never have the
ıportunity to explain? We are at the
iint where we must make some tough
cisions about what information may be
thered in the first place, who may have
cess to it, and how it may be used.

n current technical safeguards: Robert
ɔurtney, manager, data security depart-
ent, IBM Computer Laboratories

Most of us aren't as concerned as
e should be about our privacy, but we
ust start thinking about what can be
ɔne to insure that machines are used in
ccordance with established social policy.
ɔnsolidation of files would move us in
e right direction, but here the problem
an organizational one rather than tech-
cal. The State Department, for instance,
aintains nine separate files on people
at obviously should be combined, but
e individual units won't surrender their
es. In our computer system, tied to-
ther with 1400 terminals and used by
000 employees, the users are carefully
nited to only the information we want
em to have. The problem is keeping
thorized people from using data in an
nauthorized manner. Our system, how-
er, provides for strong individual ac-
ɔuntability, with the trace of user quite
simple matter. So, we have the technical
ols to implement public policy — we
ed the public policy to implement.

On managing information: Robert Fano, associate chairman, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Department of Electrical Engineering

Today most commercial computer systems have no basic access control which registers the user with the information file he is tapping. Not only do we need to control access, but also what people do with data. And not only must the user's authorization be checked, but the system must automatically check the fact of authorization before each use. Now, we have the classic problem of who watches the watcher. Who changes the names on the list of authorized users? Why, the one who pays the bill. What happens when he decides to put his own name on the list or when he commands me to get information which I have access to for a purpose which I take issue with? The computer system itself must provide adequate facilities for this superior-subordinate ritual dance. Otherwise, it will pervert relationships between people. We don't want our social relations and behavior to be governed by the idiosyncrasies of the computer. We want the computer to respond smoothly and appropriately to our social desires. This requires a lot of careful forethought. We are talking here about a lot more than just privacy. We are talking about management of information in society. Other considerations are the disposal of outdated information, certainly important to the protection of privacy, and questions of patents and copyrights. We must learn to manage the whole general system, not just protect privacy.

'ou may be familiar with the saying of luxley: "As I peek into the future, it loesn't work." Well, let's try to make it vork.

The awards presentation dinner s hosted by John Hancock Board airman Gerhard D. Bleicken, who ade this assessment of the program and participants: "My belief is that this nd of program speeds the process of mmunication along, making it a bit sier for all of us to meet the task we all are in common — of serving our fellow izens in the ways we best know to ild a stronger and more mature society those who follow. The gentlemen of e business financial press we honor here night are key arbiters in our day-to-day ort to interact fruitfully with one other."

Our society will not continue to lerate explosive urban growth and its companying ecological and social pres-res. That is the basic tenet underlying . Peter Goldmark's New Rural Society oject, funded by HUD, which will im-ement telecommunication technology decentralizing industry and giving ople a choice between urban and rural sidence. Most definitely at the fore-nt of the communications explosion, . Goldmark holds among his 160 tents in sight and sound technology ose for the 33 1/3 RPM long-playing cord, the first practical color television stem, and the video cassette. Now presi-nt and research director of Goldmark mmunications Corporation, he retired president and director of research for S Laboratories and vice president of S.

A small group of us at the Na-nal Academy in Washington were asked the government to investigate whether it's possible for communications tech-nology to provide a better distribution of people and of our resources in the United States, at least. We began a study, and after one year, we have come to the conclusion that there is no such thing as an urban problem. There are three prob-lems and they are interlinked closely — the urban problem, the rural problem, and the energy problem. The result of the study was a project now called the New Rural Society, which is funded by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, through Fair-field University, with my company in-volved.

The objective of the study is very simple — by the end of this century some 75 to 100 million Americans should have the opportunity, have a free choice whether to live and work in a rural or in an urban place. It's just that simple. This choice today doesn't exist. Why did people migrate from rural areas? There are four major ingredients — lack of employment, inadequate educational opportunities, inadequate health care and lack of cultural, recreational, and entertainment opportunities. It is pos-sible that all four can be solved, to a considerable degree through new and imaginative uses of communications and of communication technology. Let's look at employment. We have as part of our study a massive investi-gation of how service industries could

move their major operations divisions, intact, to a rural area – not suburbs – where the headquarters has suitable telecommunications contact with these outlying operations. We are undertaking what we call business communication audits with several companies and they show that the way companies are constituted today, they could, without too much trouble, create subdivisions in a rural area – self-contained, relatively autonomous divisions headed by thin layers of executives who would have to communicate face to face with their superiors in the headquarters place.

Rural health care in America is a large problem, but we have created plans, systems where with relatively little telephone communications help it is possible to expand the rural general practitioner's practice, his arms, his legs, into outlying areas, and to multiply by a considerable factor, his effectiveness, at the same time removing considerable burden from his life.

In the area of education we are working with a university to see if we cannot use electronics to bring in education of every sort – high education, vocational education, continuing education, high school education. The plan we are working on would provide college degrees, both junior college and four-year college, and even graduate degrees. The extension of the university beyond its walls is almost a necessity in America. The cost of education at the university becomes higher and higher, and more and more people, adults and young people, would like to enjoy education either where they work or at home.

Peter Goldmark

We feel we can make live, big-city entertainment available to 20 million people and not displace the 2000-live audience that's in the city. We find that cable television is probably the most important medium to bring about this transformation, because the people away from large cities must have a wide choice of programs – access to education, health, community and entertainment programs.

We have proposed to government that a domestic satellite system be linked to cable TV networks and theatres to bring live cultural events from major cities into homes with terminals for America's Bicentennial. By 1976, 20 million American homes will either be on cable or near one for easy connection.

I would like to mention that when we talk about a redistribution, or rather offer the choice to live in rural areas, we are talking about not new land, we are talking about not new cities because a so-called new town does not fit this plan. A very simple calculation shows that if you want to offer 75 to 100 million Americans within 25 years the choice of living in a new town, we would have to complete one every third day between now and the end of the century. But we do have 6200 communities from 2500 people to 100,000 people, which would be capable of absorbing that number of people without growth exceeding an additional 2 percent of their average growth today.

Our technology has made it possible to communicate so many ways – over wire, through space, under water, on records and magnetic tape. But now we have to concentrate on improving and perfecting this most important communication system, the one from man to man.

As part of its Awards for Excellence program each year John Hancock co-sponsors with a major university a one-day symposium on a subject of current public interest. These proceedings are from the 1973 program held at the School of Public Communication, Boston University. Awards for Excellence winners in six categories receive a $1000 cash award and bronze plaque for published articles adjudged to have contributed significantly to consumer understanding of business and finance.

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200 Berkeley Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02117